

# IDAHO EMPLOYMENT

A monthly newsletter of the Idaho Department of Labor



Volume 14.4

A ward-Winning Newsletter

April 2002 Issue/February 2002 Data

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## State Overview

### IDAHO UNEMPLOYMENT RATE INCREASES IN FEBRUARY

*Labor force details for the state, labor market areas, counties, and major cities can be found in State Table 1 on page 3.*

From January to February 2001, Idaho's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased one-tenth of a percentage point to 5.6 percent. February marks the sixth consecutive month that the state's unemployment rate has been above 5.0 percent. This February's rate is nine-tenths of a percentage point above the February 2001 rate of 4.7 percent. The February 2002 national unemployment rate was 5.5 percent, down slightly from January's rate of 5.6 percent.

Idaho's *Civilian Labor Force* increased 0.4 percent from January to a total of 693,800 people in February. The growth resulted from an increase in both the number of people unemployed (800) and the number of people employed (2,300). The increase in the number unemployed is not unusual because fewer jobs typically are created during February due to the seasonal downturns in many businesses and workers on seasonal lay-off status. Although the increase between January and February was less in 2002, the overall number of unemployed persons was greater than in February 2001. This increase is due partially to the large number of lay-offs that occurred after April 2001 and to a larger labor force in general. The growth in the labor force in February 2002 indicates that the employment opportunities in Idaho are stronger following several months of weak or no growth during the last half of 2001. The strength of employment growth varies between the various labor market areas and counties as discussed in the following paragraphs.

### AREA LABOR FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

Unemployment rates are calculated each month for eight Labor Market Area (LMAs) in Idaho—Boise City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), Pocatello City MSA, Bonneville LMA, Cassia-Minidoka LMA, Idaho-Lewis LMA, Magic Valley LMA, Panhandle LMA, and Seaport LMA. State Table 1 on page 3 lists the counties included in each labor market area.

The Bonneville LMA had the lowest unemployment rate among the LMAs at 4.1 percent, unchanged from January 2002 and February 2001. The Magic Valley LMA followed closely with an unemployment rate of 4.2 percent, down two-tenths of a percentage point from January 2002 but one-tenth of a percentage point above February 2001. The Boise City MSA, with an unemployment rate of 5.1 percent, had the largest increase from February 2001 when the unemployment rate was 3.2 percent, the lowest among the LMAs. The significant increase in the unemployment rate in Idaho's largest LMA is a result of the large number of layoffs in the "electronics" industry that occurred in 2001.

### UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSTATION EXTENDED



Since March 10, 2002, some Idaho claimants have been eligible for Temporary Emergency Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) as part of the federal economic stimulus package signed by President Bush. See the **FYI** section on page 21 for more information.

The Panhandle LMA edged out the Idaho-Lewis LMA in February as the LMA with the highest unemployment rate at 8.6 percent, up slightly from 8.5 percent from January. A drop of more than two percentage points in Lewis County's unemployment rate and a full percentage drop in Idaho County's rate resulted in the Idaho-Lewis LMA unemployment rate dropping to 8.5 percent. This is the first time since May 2001 when the Idaho-Lewis LMA unemployment rate has not been the highest in the state. In May 2001 both the Idaho-Lewis and Panhandle LMAs had an unemployment rate of 9.4 percent.

## COUNTY LABOR FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

Of the 44 counties in the state, four had double-digit unemployment rates in February.

- Clearwater County had the highest unemployment rate at 14.5 percent, down from 14.4 percent in January and 17.9 percent in February 2001.
- Adams County, at 13.4 percent, was down from 13.6 percent in January and 14.9 percent in February 2001.
- Shoshone County, at 11.0 percent, was down from 11.1 percent in January and 11.2 percent in February 2001.
- Benewah County, at 10.2 percent, was down from 12.3 percent in January but up from 9.4 percent in February 2001.
- Idaho County, which experienced double-digit unemployment in January, dropped from 10.2 percent to 9.1 percent in February.

These counties usually have been on the double-digit list from the last year. The depressed state of the lumber industries is the primary reason for their high unemployment rates. Shoshone County's persistent high unemployment rate is due to the enormous decline in the Mining industry.

Seven counties had unemployment rates less than 4.0 percent in February.

- Madison County had the lowest unemployment rate at 2.0 percent, unchanged from January and down from 2.3 percent in February 2001.
- Teton County, at 3.3 percent, was down from 3.8 percent in January but up from 2.7 percent in February 2001.
- Latah County, at 3.5 percent, was down from 3.6 percent in January and 3.8 percent in February 2001.
- Camas County, at 3.6 percent, was up from 3.0 percent in January but down from 3.9 in February 2001.
- Blaine County, at 3.6 percent, was down from 3.8 percent in January but up from 2.9 percent in February 2001.
- Bonneville County, at 3.7 percent, was unchanged from January but up from 3.6 percent in February 2001.
- Gooding County, at 3.8 percent, was up from 3.6 percent in January but down from 3.9 percent in February.

Major employers in Latah and Madison Counties are institutions of higher learning—the University of Idaho and BYU-Idaho. These institutions not only employ a large number of professional and support personnel, but also provide a large number of jobs for students. Camas and Teton Counties have small labor forces ranging in size from 500 to 4,000. Any change in the number unemployed has a larger impact on the rate than those counties with a larger labor force.

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*IDAHO EMPLOYMENT is funded either partially or entirely by federal grant funds from the U.S. Department of Labor. Ninety-five percent of administrative funding at the Idaho Department of Labor is provided by these federal grants, with the remainder funded by state sources. Fiscal Year 2000 administrative expenditures for the Idaho Department of Labor totaled \$39,968,552.*

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## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased 0.5 percent from both January 2002 and February 2001 to 556,800 jobs in February. The *Goods-Producing Industries* lost 700 jobs from January to February. The *Service-Producing Industries* added 3,700 jobs. However, from February 2002, these two major industrial sectors experienced very diverse activity with the *Goods-Producing Industries* showing a loss of 7,500 jobs and *Service-Producing Industries* adding 10,400 jobs.

The month-over-month increase in job growth occurred after the holiday season and at the beginning of the second half of the school year. *State Government*, in particular *State Education*, was responsible for the majority of this increase. *State Education* increased by 1,700 jobs, resulting in *State Government* showing a rise in employment of 2,000 from January to February 2002.

The year-over-year increase in job growth shows 4.6 percent, or 6,700, more jobs in the *Service* sector. The largest increases were in *State & Local Government* and *Health Services*, 3,800 and 2,700 jobs, respectively. The impact of the economic slowdown in the "electronics" industry is reflected in the loss of 6,000 jobs in *Manufacturing*.

## GOODS PRODUCING INDUSTRIES

In the *Goods-Producing Industries* sector, the number of jobs in February dropped by 700 jobs from January. That was a small decrease of only 0.7 percent in a group of industries that has over 100,000 jobs throughout the state. Winter conditions contributed to the loss of 400 jobs in *Construction* month-over-month, with most of the losses occurring in *Special Trades Contractors* (painting, plumbing, electrical work, etc.). The other components of the *Goods-Producing Industries* had offsetting job gains and losses, with no industry having significant changes.

## Mining

*Mining* added fewer than 100 jobs in February but the rounding process brought the number of jobs to 1,600. However, from February 2001, the *Mining* industry lost 400 jobs, a 20 percent decline. Metal Mining remained unchanged in February, month-over-month, at 500 jobs—the lowest level in more than a century. The industry took a big hit year-over-year by losing 500 jobs from February 2001—a 50.0 percent drop. The residual *Mining* category experienced a small increase in the number of jobs in February. The number of jobs in this sector should begin to show an increase in March as the warm weather makes it easier to do open-pit mining of phosphate used in fertilizer production and of sand/gravel used in construction.

## Construction

The number of *Construction* jobs dropped by 400 in February 2002 month-over-month. Cold temperatures and snow, along with an increase in interest rates, made it difficult to do much home building in February. *Heavy Construction* also normally slows in the winter months. The 400 jobs that were lost amounted to a modest 1.3 percent drop in employment. The slowdown in *Construction*

State Table 1: February 2002 Labor Force (preliminary)

Seasonally Adjusted	Labor Force	Unemp.	% Unemp.	Total Emp.
<b>Seaport LMA</b>	34,330	1,560	4.5	32,770
Nez Perce County	22,840	1,050	4.6	21,790
Asotin County, WA	11,500	510	4.4	10,990
<b>Boise City MSA</b>	253,330	12,860	5.1	240,470
Ada County	183,070	8,260	4.5	174,810
Canyon County	70,250	4,600	6.5	65,650
<b>Pocatello City MSA*</b>	41,410	2,400	5.8	39,010
<b>Bonneville LMA</b>	81,710	3,360	4.1	78,350
Bingham County	22,300	1,100	4.9	21,200
Bonneville County	47,350	1,750	3.7	45,600
Butte County	1,630	65	4.0	1,565
Jefferson County	10,440	450	4.3	9,990
<b>Cassia-Minidoka LMA</b>	20,160	1,420	7.0	18,740
Cassia County	9,920	610	6.2	9,310
Minidoka County	10,230	810	7.9	9,420
<b>Idaho-Lewis LMA</b>	7,680	650	8.5	7,030
Idaho County	6,160	560	9.1	5,600
Lewis County	1,530	90	5.9	1,440
<b>Panhandle LMA</b>	92,960	8,020	8.6	84,940
Benewah County	4,550	465	10.2	4,085
Bonner County	18,070	1,480	8.2	16,590
Boundary County	4,615	335	7.3	4,280
Kootenai County	58,820	4,980	8.5	53,840
Shoshone County	6,910	760	11.0	6,150
<b>Magic Valley LMA</b>	51,480	2,180	4.2	49,300
Gooding County	7,160	270	3.8	6,890
Jerome County	9,630	405	4.2	9,225
Twin Falls County	34,700	1,505	4.3	33,195
Adams County	1,580	210	13.4	1,370
Bear Lake County	2,910	140	4.9	2,770
Blaine County	12,515	455	3.6	12,060
Boise County	2,425	120	4.9	2,305
Camas County	445	15	3.6	430
Caribou County	3,545	225	6.3	3,320
Clark County	805	45	5.4	760
Clearwater County	3,700	540	14.5	3,160
Custer County	2,195	195	8.9	2,000
Elmore County	10,020	670	6.7	9,350
Franklin County	5,150	220	4.3	4,930
Fremont County	4,830	300	6.2	4,530
Gem County	6,760	620	9.2	6,140
Latah County	15,190	540	3.5	14,650
Lemhi County	3,760	290	7.8	3,470
Lincoln County	2,100	110	5.3	1,990
Madison County	12,150	240	2.0	11,910
Oneida County	1,795	70	4.0	1,725
Owyhee County	4,175	195	4.7	3,980
Payette County	10,205	885	8.7	9,320
Power County	3,585	285	7.9	3,300
Teton County	3,930	130	3.3	3,800
Valley County	4,130	360	8.7	3,770
Washington County	4,505	315	7.0	4,190
<b>State of Idaho</b>	<b>693,800</b>	<b>39,120</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>654,680</b>
<b>Idaho Cities</b>				
Boise	115,210	4,950	4.3	110,260
Coeur d'Alene	20,640	1,300	6.3	19,340
Idaho Falls	29,200	1,090	3.7	28,110
Lewiston	19,450	770	4.0	18,680
Nampa	21,375	1,445	6.8	19,930
Pocatello	29,730	1,650	5.5	28,080
Twin Falls	18,060	800	4.4	17,260

\* Pocatello MSA includes all of Bannock County.

activity continued from January when the number of *Construction* jobs fell below the year ago level for the first time in several years.

Although the number of *Construction* jobs from last year reflects an increase, the **Wells Fargo Idaho Construction Report, December 2001** states, "Idaho's total valuation in 2001 fell for the first time since 1997, dropping 0.6 percent following a gain of 4.6 percent in 2000 and 7.4 percent in 1999." State Table 2, below, shows the changes in employment and total residential and commercial construction value from 1990. The drop in valuation is an indicator of the direction the construction industry could take in 2002. Construction valuation generally reflects future projects rather than projects currently underway. It is anticipated that although the number of construction jobs will increase in 2002, it will be at a much slower rate than previous years.

State Table 2: Construction Valuations 1990-2001

Year	Annual Average Employment	% Change from Prev. Yr.	Total Construction Valuation	% Change from Prev. Yr.
1990	18,760	16.4	\$771,416,953	21.3
1991	20,152	7.4	823,772,629	6.8
1992	22,153	9.9	1,066,528,975	29.5
1993	24,699	11.5	1,331,721,579	24.9
1994	29,017	17.5	1,565,155,900	17.5
1995	29,642	2.2	1,822,257,900	16.4
1996	30,615	3.3	1,795,924,318	-1.4
1997	31,870	4.1	1,734,624,821	-3.4
1998	32,228	1.1	1,880,698,428	8.4
1999	35,022	8.7	2,020,462,323	7.4
2000	36,432	4.0	2,113,294,271	4.6
2001	37,584	3.2	2,101,595,265	-0.6

Source: Well's Fargo Idaho Construction Report, 2001

## MANUFACTURING

*Manufacturing* employment in Idaho dropped by 400 jobs from January to February 2002—from 71,400 to 71,000—resulting in a decrease of 0.6 percent. The drop in the number of *Manufacturing* jobs between January and February were primarily in two industrial sectors—*Lumber & Wood Products*, specifically *Logging and Wood Buildings & Mobile Homes*, and *Electronic & Other Electrical Equipment & Components, except Computer Equipment*.

### Logging

The number of jobs in the *Logging* industry from January to February 2002 dropped to 1,900—a 5.0 percent decrease month-over-month and a 9.5 percent drop from February 2001. The drop amounts to a loss of 100 jobs since January, which is not unusual at that time of year because the weather is not conducive to logging. The year-over-year decrease in jobs, however, reflects the overall struggle that the lumber industry had in 2001. The closure of several sawmills has reduced the demand for

timber, thus reducing the number of jobs in the logging industry.

### Wood Buildings & Mobile Homes

*Wood Buildings & Mobile Homes* experienced a drop of 100 jobs from January to February 2002—a 9.1 percent decrease—but the number of jobs remains unchanged from one year ago at 1,000. As the home mortgage rates dropped, so did the demand for modular homes, thus reducing job orders. Winter also is a slow time for this industry. However, orders for modular buildings for the 2002 Olympics helped keep the number of jobs steady during 2001.

### Electronic & Other Electrical Equipment & Components, except Computer Equipment

This sector has particularly felt the impact of the national recession. The number of jobs has decreased 2,300, or 14.8 percent, in the past 12 months. The major layoffs by businesses within this industry began in mid- to late March 2001. The number of jobs continues to decrease as companies attempt to find ways to stay in business while cutting costs. Some businesses instituted one to two weeks of mandatory time off for their employees as one cost cutting measure.

## NONDURABLE GOODS

The loss of 400 jobs in *Chemicals & Allied Products* from one year ago reflects the closure of Astaris in December in Pocatello. Both *Food Processing* and *Printing, Publishing & Allied Products* industries have experienced a loss of 400 jobs from February 2001. The job losses occurred as these two sectors implemented cost saving programs which often resulted in the elimination of jobs.

## SERVICE PRODUCING INDUSTRIES

The *Government* sector accounted for most of the jobs gained in the *Service-Producing Industries* during February by adding 3,100 jobs, bringing the total number of jobs in this sector to 452,800.

The *Service-Producing Industries* showed a large increase in February and was almost solely responsible for the rise in the number of non-farm jobs from February 2001. Major contributors to this year-over-year job growth were the *Services* and *Government* industries. There was an increase of 2.4 percent, or 3,700, new jobs from February 2001.

### Services

*Services* showed an employment increase of 1,300 jobs in February, which is a 0.9 percent increase over January and a 4.6 percent increase over one year ago. *Health Services* and *Engineering, Accounting, Research, Management, & Related Services* contributed to the addition of 1,300 new jobs in *Services* in February by adding 600 and 400 new jobs, respectively. The growth in the *Health Services* sector was due primarily to the addition of 400 jobs in February in *Hospitals*. The number of jobs in *Health Services*—39,900—is 2,700 above February 2001. The number of jobs has increased not only in *Hospitals* (1,300) but in nursing

(continued on page 21)

State Table 3: Nonfarm Payroll Jobs

BY PLACE OF WORK	Feb 2002*	Jan 2002	Feb 2001	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	556,800	553,800	553,900	0.5	0.5
<b>GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES</b>	103,900	104,600	111,400	-0.7	-6.7
<b>Mining</b>	1,600	1,500	2,000	6.7	-20.0
Metal Mining	500	500	1,000	0.0	-50.0
<b>Construction</b>	31,300	31,700	32,400	-1.3	-3.4
<b>Manufacturing</b>	71,000	71,400	77,000	-0.6	-7.8
Durable Goods	43,300	43,700	48,000	-0.9	-9.8
Lumber & Wood Products	10,600	10,800	11,500	-1.9	-7.8
Logging	1,900	2,000	2,100	-5.0	-9.5
Sawmills & Planing Mills	4,000	4,000	4,600	0.0	-13.0
Wood Buildings & Mobile Homes	1,000	1,100	1,000	-9.1	0.0
Other Lumber & Wood Products	3,700	3,700	3,800	0.0	-2.6
Stone, Clay, Glass & Concrete Products	1,400	1,400	1,300	0.0	7.7
Fabricated Metal Products, exc. Machinery & Transportation Equip.	2,900	2,900	3,000	0.0	-3.3
Industrial & Commercial Machinery & Computer Equipment	9,400	9,400	10,700	0.0	-12.1
Electronic & Other Electrical Equip. & Components, Exc., Computer	13,200	13,400	15,500	-1.5	-14.8
Transportation Equipment	2,100	2,100	2,200	0.0	-4.5
Other Durable Goods	3,700	3,700	3,800	0.0	-2.6
Nondurable Goods	27,700	27,700	29,000	0.0	-4.5
Food Processing	16,700	16,700	17,100	0.0	-2.3
Canned, Frozen, & Preserved Fruits, Vegetables & Food Specialties	9,000	9,100	9,300	-1.1	-3.2
Paper Products	2,100	2,100	2,200	0.0	-4.5
Printing, Publishing & Allied Products	4,900	5,000	5,300	-2.0	-7.5
Chemicals & Allied Products	2,000	2,000	2,400	0.0	-16.7
Other Nondurable Goods	2,000	1,900	2,000	5.3	0.0
<b>SERVICE-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES</b>	452,900	449,200	442,500	0.8	2.4
<b>Transportation, Communications, &amp; Utilities</b>	27,200	27,400	27,700	-0.7	-1.8
Transportation	17,300	17,300	17,300	0.0	0.0
Railroad	1,300	1,300	1,300	0.0	0.0
Motor Freight Transportation & Warehousing	10,200	10,300	10,200	-1.0	0.0
Communications	6,000	6,100	6,500	-1.6	-7.7
Electric, Gas, & Sanitary Services	3,900	4,000	3,900	-2.5	0.0
<b>Trade</b>	136,600	137,100	137,400	-0.4	-0.6
Wholesale Trade	31,500	31,400	31,500	0.3	0.0
Durable Goods	14,500	14,500	14,700	0.0	-1.4
Nondurable Goods	17,000	16,900	16,800	0.6	1.2
Retail Trade	105,100	105,700	105,900	-0.6	-0.8
Building Materials, Hardware, Garden Supply & Manuf. Home Dealers	6,200	6,200	5,900	0.0	5.1
General Merchandise Stores	13,200	13,500	13,600	-2.2	-2.9
Food Stores	18,200	18,400	18,500	-1.1	-1.6
Automotive Dealers & Gasoline Service Stations	11,900	12,000	11,800	-0.8	0.8
Eating & Drinking Places	36,700	36,600	36,500	0.3	0.5
<b>Finance, Insurance &amp; Real Estate</b>	24,500	24,500	23,300	0.0	5.2
Banking	7,400	7,400	7,200	0.0	2.8
<b>Services</b>	151,100	149,800	144,400	0.9	4.6
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	7,400	7,400	7,800	0.0	-5.1
Personal Services	4,300	4,300	4,600	0.0	-6.5
Business Services	29,300	29,500	27,400	-0.7	6.9
Amusement and Recreation Services	6,900	7,000	6,600	-1.4	4.5
Health Services	39,900	39,300	37,200	1.5	7.3
Hospitals	13,900	13,500	12,600	3.0	10.3
Engineering, Accounting, Research, Management, & Related Services	19,900	19,600	18,900	1.5	5.3
<b>Government</b>	113,500	110,400	109,700	2.8	3.5
Federal Government	12,000	12,100	12,000	-0.8	0.0
State & Local Government	101,500	98,300	97,700	3.3	3.9
State Government	29,500	27,500	29,100	7.3	1.4
Education	14,500	12,800	14,300	13.3	1.4
Administration	15,000	14,700	14,800	2.0	1.4
Local Government	72,000	70,800	68,600	1.7	5.0
Education	41,000	40,000	40,000	2.5	2.5
Administration	31,000	30,800	28,600	0.6	8.4

\* Preliminary Estimate

\*\* Estimates include all full or part time wage and salary workers who worked or received pay in the following industry groups during the pay period ending nearest the 12th of the month.

DATA PREPARED IN COOPERATION WITH THE BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

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# State Table 4: Economic Indicators

	Feb 2002	Jan 2002	Feb 2001	% Change From					
				Last Month	Last Year				
IDAHO LABOR FORCE <sup>(1)</sup>									
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>									
Civilian Labor Force	693,800	690,700	671,100	0.4	3.4				
Unemployment	39,100	38,300	31,400	2.1	24.5				
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	5.6	5.5	4.7						
Total Employment	654,700	652,400	639,700	0.4	2.3				
<b>Unadjusted</b>									
Civilian Labor Force	683,700	679,900	661,100	0.6	3.4				
Unemployment	47,300	46,100	39,600	2.6	19.4				
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	6.9	6.8	6.0						
Total Employment	636,400	633,800	621,500	0.4	2.4				
U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE <sup>(2)</sup>	5.5	5.6	4.2						
U.S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX <sup>(2)</sup>									
Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI-W)	173.7	173.2	172.4	0.3	0.8				
All Urban Consumer (CPI-U)	177.8	177.1	175.8	0.4	1.1				
AGRICULTURE									
Agriculture Employment	27,270	26,440	26,640	3.1	2.4				
Operators	9,010	9,010	9,010	0.0	0.0				
Unpaid Family	370	360	370	2.8	0.0				
Hired Workers	17,890	17,070	17,260	4.8	3.7				
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE									
<b>Claims Activities</b>									
Initial Claims <sup>(3)</sup>	11,422	15,743	10,324	-27.4	10.6				
Weeks Claimed <sup>(4)</sup>	119,406	124,202	90,820	-3.9	31.5				
<b>Benefit Payment Activities<sup>(5)</sup></b>									
Weeks Compensated	102,352	120,606	78,311	-15.1	30.7				
Total Benefit \$ Paid	\$22,907,425	\$27,149,443	\$16,708,671	-15.6	37.1				
Average Weekly Benefit Amount	\$223.81	\$225.11	\$213.36	-0.6	4.9				
Covered Employers	39,862	40,474	39,717	-1.5	0.4				
Total Benefit \$ Paid During Last 12 Months <sup>(4)</sup>	\$164,916,318	\$158,717,564	\$111,471,653	3.9	47.9				
(1) Preliminary Estimate									
(2) Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics									
(3) Includes all entitlements/programs on Intrastate and Interstate Agent, New, and Additional Claims									
(4) Includes all entitlements/programs, Intrastate and Interstate Agent									
(5) Includes all entitlements/programs, Total Liable Activities									
HOURS AND EARNINGS									
	Average Weekly Earnings*			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	Feb 2002	Jan 2002	Feb 2001	Feb 2002	Jan 2002	Feb 2001	Feb 2002	Jan 2002	Feb 2001
Mining	\$609.11	\$618.09	\$616.06	36.3	37.1	38.6	\$16.78	\$16.66	\$15.96
Construction	\$570.72	\$578.55	\$554.93	32.8	33.5	35.1	\$17.40	\$17.27	\$15.81
Total Manufacturing	\$556.78	\$578.89	\$595.13	35.6	36.5	37.5	\$15.64	\$15.86	\$15.87
Lumber & Wood Products	\$543.54	\$556.08	\$487.45	36.9	36.9	34.4	\$14.73	\$15.07	\$14.17
Food & Kindred Products	\$436.69	\$454.35	\$436.36	36.3	38.9	37.2	\$12.03	\$11.68	\$11.73
Communications	\$806.70	\$820.69	\$750.75	41.2	43.4	42.9	\$19.58	\$18.91	\$17.50
Electric, Gas, & Sanitary Services	\$797.42	\$813.31	\$897.26	37.9	38.4	40.6	\$21.04	\$21.18	\$22.10
Trade	\$319.22	\$322.61	\$307.01	28.4	28.6	28.8	\$11.24	\$11.28	\$10.66
Wholesale Trade	\$502.06	\$511.18	\$515.16	33.9	35.4	36.0	\$14.81	\$14.44	\$14.31
Retail Trade	\$267.73	\$271.01	\$251.78	26.8	26.7	26.9	\$9.99	\$10.15	\$9.36
DATA PREPARED IN COOPERATION WITH THE BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS									
* These average earnings are computed on a gross basis and reflect changes in premium pay for overtime and late shift work as well as changes in basic hourly and incentive wage									



# PANHANDLE

BENEWAH, BONNER, BOUNDARY, KOOTENAI, & SHOSHONE COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The U.S. economic slowdown nudged the Panhandle's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate from 8.5 percent in January to 8.6 percent in February. The previous February, the unemployment rate was 7.7 percent. Preliminary signs suggest that the Panhandle's economy may be approaching a turning point, so many people believe February's unemployment rate could be nearly the highest unemployment rate the Panhandle will see.

Meanwhile, every Panhandle county is experiencing high unemployment. The Panhandle's largest county, Kootenai County, endured the region's largest increase in unemployment. Job losses in manufacturing, tourism, retail, temporary employment agencies, and nonprofit organizations—added to job losses in Spokane County, where many Kootenai County residents work—pushed the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate from 7.0 percent in February 2001 to 8.5 a year later. Benewah County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, which was 9.4 percent in February 2001, rose to 10.2 percent this February, as the county's economic doldrums took a toll. Bonner County's unemployment rate was 7.7 percent in February 2001. A year later, job losses in lumber, other manufacturing, and retail operations pushed the unemployment rate to 8.2 percent. Bonner County's unemployment rate is expected to rise in March, when the full effect of the Coldwater Creek layoff of 150 employees will be felt. Shoshone County's unemployment rate eased down slightly from 11.2 percent in February 2001 (when the county's largest employer, the Sunshine Mine, closed) to a still staggering 11.0 percent a year later. Boundary County's unemployment rate moved down from 9.7 percent in February 2001, when its forest products industry was in turmoil, to 7.3 percent in February 2002 after the lumber market stabilized.

**Month-over-Month Changes:** The job decreases in *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* between January and February, shown in Panhan-

Panhandle Table 1: Labor Force & Employment

	Feb 2002*	Jan 2001	Feb 2001	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	92,960	92,300	88,670	0.7	4.8
Unemployed	8,020	7,860	6,820	2.0	17.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.6	8.5	7.7		
Total Employment	84,940	84,440	81,850	0.6	3.8
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	91,800	91,470	87,510	0.4	4.9
Unemployed	10,640	9,890	9,360	7.6	13.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	11.6	10.8	10.7		
Total Employment	81,160	81,580	78,150	-0.5	3.9
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>					
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	65,230	65,530	63,860	-0.5	2.1
Mining	12,530	12,630	13,400	-0.8	-6.5
Construction	530	530	870	0.0	-39.1
Manufacturing	3,690	3,830	3,770	-3.7	-2.1
Lumber & Wood Products	8,310	8,270	8,760	0.5	-5.1
All Other Manufacturing	3,960	3,980	4,120	-0.5	-3.9
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	4,350	4,290	4,640	1.4	-6.3
Transportation	52,700	52,900	50,460	-0.4	4.4
Communication & Utilities	1,350	1,390	1,340	-2.9	0.7
Wholesale Trade	1,060	1,060	1,080	0.0	-1.9
Retail Trade	2,060	2,050	2,080	0.5	-1.0
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	13,970	14,140	14,100	-1.2	-0.9
Service & Miscellaneous	2,710	2,670	2,470	1.5	9.7
Government Administration	17,120	17,310	15,350	-1.1	11.5
Government Education	8,820	8,850	8,390	-0.3	5.1
	5,610	5,430	5,650	3.3	-0.7

\* Preliminary estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

dle Table 1, were similar to the decreases that occur every year between January and February, as retail establishments cut jobs after the post-Christmas sales, winter tourism begins to slow, and spring break-up begins making forest roads impassable for loggers. February always is the month of lowest employment in the Idaho Panhandle.

**Year-over-Year Changes:** As Panhandle Table 1 shows, *Goods-Producing Industries* endured the largest job losses between February 2001 and February 2002. *Mining* lost 340 jobs, falling to its lowest level in more than 110 years. Low mortgage rates buoyed residential construction, but nonresidential construction fell enough to cause *Construction* to lose 80 jobs. The Panhandle's traditional mainstay industry, *Lumber & Wood Products*, lost 60 jobs during the 12-month period after losing 300 jobs during the previous 12 months. Like the rest of the U.S., the Panhandle has been losing manufacturing jobs since the fall of 2000. *All Other Manufacturing* peaked at 4,700 jobs in November 2000, fell to 4,640 jobs in February 2001, and then fell to 4,350 jobs by February 2002. *Manufacturing* sectors experiencing the greatest job losses were electronic assembly, metal products, newspaper publishing, furniture, and plastics.



*Service-Producing Industries* added 2,240 jobs between February 2001 and February 2002, which offset the 870 jobs lost by *Goods-Producing Industries*. Two companies added nearly 1,700 jobs of those 2,240 jobs. One was Center Partners, which opened a call center in Coeur d'Alene in March 2001 and a call center in Post Falls in January 2002. Wal-Mart added about 520 *Retail Trade* jobs between January's opening of Wal-Mart in Post Falls and last summer's expansion of Wal-Mart in Sandpoint. Without the openings and expansions of Center Partners and Wal-Mart, the Panhandle would have lost 330 jobs instead of gaining 1,370 jobs.

**Explaining A Seeming Discrepancy:** How could the Panhandle gain 1,370 payroll jobs and still add 1,280 people to the rolls of the unemployed? There are two major reasons: (1) the increase in the Panhandle's labor force was far larger than the job growth, and (2) losses of payroll jobs in Spokane County, where many Kootenai and Bonner County residents work, put some of those counties' residents out of work.

## **SPECIAL TOPIC**

### **Tribal Re-Classification Boosts Government Employment**

Observant readers of this newsletter may have noted that the *Government Administration* category shown in Panhandle Table 1 is more than 1,000 jobs higher than what we reported prior to February. The jump in *Government Administration* resulted from a change in classification of Indian tribes from the private-sector to government, as required by new standards of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Starting with the publication of January 2002 numbers, we began classifying tribal operations as governmental entities. Prior to the change, jobs at tribal operations were counted in the private sector and showed up in the appropriate industrial sectors. For example, the tribe's lodging, amusement, health care, educational, and tribal management jobs showed up in *Services*, while their store jobs showed up in *Retail Trade*. Their farm jobs were not included in *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs*.

All of the statistics in Panhandle Table 1, not just this year's numbers but also last year's numbers, reflect the change in classification. The *Government Administration* statistics for February 2002, January 2002, and February 2001 all include the 1,100 jobs with the Coeur d'Alene and Kootenai Tribes. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe employs nearly 400 people at its headquarters, school, retail stores, Benewah Medical & Wellness Center, farm, and other operations in Benewah County and more than 500 people at its casino, hotel, and convenience store in Kootenai County. The Kootenai Tribe employs more than 200 people at the Kootenai River Inn & Casino and other tribal operations in Boundary County. The Pacific Northwest Fiberboard plant in Plummer, which the tribe and two partners own, is not included in *Government Administration*; it continues to be classified as a private-sector manufacturing business.

*Government Administration* always included federal, state, and local government establishments except school districts and colleges, and now it includes all tribal estab-

lishments, even the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's school in DeSmet and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's farm. In February 2002, the federal government employed about 1,100 people, state government employed about 1,300 people, and local government establishments excluding the tribes, community hospitals, and schools employed about 3,100 people.

*Government Administration* always has included the jobs at the Panhandle's five community hospitals: Benewah Community Hospital in St. Maries (employing an estimated 120 people in February 2002); Bonner General Hospital in Sandpoint (350); Boundary Community Hospital in Bonners Ferry (170); Kootenai Medical Center in Coeur d'Alene (1,480); and Shoshone Medical Center in Kellogg (110).

## **AREA DEVELOPMENTS**

### **Benewah County**

- Regulus Stud Mill, a St. Maries lumber mill, will build a new dry kiln this year to replace its two existing dry kilns. Timber communities such as St. Maries always are pleased to see mills making investments to update their equipment. Regulus employs about 100 people.

### **Bonner County**

- Just a month after it completed its first successful recruitment of a business to the Sandpoint area, the Bonner County Economic Development Corp. announced that it had persuaded a Texas manufacturer to move to Sandpoint. R.J. Klein & Company, a manufacturer of wooden house wares including serving trays and wine racks, will move from San Antonio to Sandpoint in April. It initially will employ three Sandpoint residents and expects to hire three to four more during the next year. Sandpoint Job Service has facilitated the company's move by providing office space where R.J. Klein & Company could interview prospective employees and vendors.

### **Kootenai County**

- New businesses in Hayden include Johnny's Original Pizza and Deli serving brick oven pizza, deli sandwiches, and cheesecake at 285 West Hayden Avenue, and The Produce Guys, selling fresh vegetables, fruit, and gourmet foods at 100 West Prairie Avenue.
- Coeur d'Alene recently welcomed the following new businesses: Dig In Outfitters, selling hunting and fishing supplies and offering guided trips from 2425 Government Way; Preferred Medical, a home oxygen and medical equipment company at 1101 Ironwood Drive; Your Daily Fix, a coffee stand at the corner of Government Way and Seale Avenue; a Verizon Wireless outlet at the Silver Lake Mall; and Links for You, selling Italian charm bracelets at the Silver Lake Mall.

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# SEAPORT

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS, & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

## LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

Seaport's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased in February to 4.5 percent from January's rate of 4.3 percent, as shown in Seaport Table 1. In February 2001, the rate was 4.4 percent. Total employment increased by 120 in February 2002. In spite of this increase, the real concern is the employment decrease from last year. Compared to February 2000, total employment has decreased by 400.

In February, the Seaport's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 140 jobs from January 2002, but decreased by 720 jobs from February 2001. Slight employment increases occurred only in *Services* and *Government*. From February 2001, employment decreases were recorded in every industry. In view of the fact that one or two industries cannot be pinpointed as the cause of this year-over-year decrease, the numbers suggest a market decrease, most likely in response to employment diminishing in neighboring communities.

## SPECIAL TOPIC

### Covered Employers

Covered employers include all employers covered by Idaho's Unemployment Insurance law. This law covers approximately 92 percent of employers in Idaho. As shown in Seaport Table 2, the number of employers started to decrease in all five North Central Idaho counties between 1996 and 1997, and continued through 2001. Even though

Seaport Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Nez Perce County, Idaho, and Asotin County, Washington

	Feb 2002*	Jan 2002	Feb 2001	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	34,330	34,130	34,700	0.6	-1.1
Unemployment	1,560	1,480	1,530	5.4	2.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.5	4.3	4.4	0.2	-0.1
Total Employment	32,770	32,650	33,170	-5.4	-1.2
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	34,470	34,230	34,860	0.7	-1.1
Unemployment	1,980	1,880	2,000	5.3	-1.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.7	5.5	5.7	0.2	0.0
Total Employment	32,490	32,350	32,860	0.4	-1.1
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	24,840	24,700	25,560	0.6	-2.8
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	4,830	4,850	5,050	-0.4	-4.4
Mining & Construction	1,090	1,100	1,200	-0.9	-9.2
Manufacturing	3,740	3,750	3,850	-0.3	-2.9
Food Processing	70	70	100	0.0	-30.0
Lumber & Wood Products	690	700	730	-1.4	-5.5
Paper Products	1,690	1,680	1,710	0.6	-1.2
All Other Manufacturing	1,290	1,300	1,310	-0.8	-1.5
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	20,010	19,850	20,510	0.8	-2.4
Transportation	1,380	1,400	1,400	-1.4	-1.4
Communications & Utilities	280	280	290	0.0	-3.4
Wholesale Trade	900	900	940	0.0	-4.3
Retail Trade	4,590	4,690	4,920	-2.1	-6.7
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,380	1,380	1,400	0.0	-1.4
Services	6,360	6,340	6,500	0.3	-2.2
Government Administration	2,720	2,660	2,530	2.3	7.5
Government Education	2,400	2,200	2,530	9.1	-5.1
*Preliminary Estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month					

total decreases have been recorded, new employers are emerging. A common trend throughout North Central Idaho is that most new employers are small with less than 10 employees. The number of large employers, those with 100 or more employees, has decreased in the past five years.

Seaport Table 2: Covered Employers 1990-present

County	Covered Employers											
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	* 2001
Clearwater	306	344	342	347	347	335	341	341	335	339	339	327
Idaho	410	472	486	491	511	522	544	562	561	553	545	538
Latah	772	859	870	913	944	980	1,006	1,022	1,024	1,014	992	982
Lewis	140	169	164	168	176	183	175	179	173	168	168	163
Nez Perce	1,112	1,201	1,261	1,289	1,332	1,350	1,365	1,371	1,354	1,341	1,323	1,332

\* Estimate based on the monthly average of the first 3 quarters of 2001

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Clearwater County

- Last year, river guides and outfitters in Clearwater County hosted people from as far away as England, Ireland, and even Japan, all looking to hook that "big one," according to a recent report. When guides ask the visitors why they come, they report several different responses. "They're from the big cities. They like the backcountry and the friendly people. They miss that. The people from Ireland keep calling and asking, 'How's the fishing? We're coming back. We're coming back!'" According to most guides, customers do more than just eat, sleep, and fish; they also shop and sometimes bring families along, too.

### Idaho & Lewis Counties

- Primeland Cooperatives, formerly Union Warehouse and Supply Company, added a couple of familiar faces to their Grangeville branch office. Colin Crea, who worked for the company out of Ferdinand and Cottonwood, has made the transition to the Grangeville office. Crea will help with sales and consulting in the agronomy division. Along with Crea, Jug Thomason, a longtime employee of the former Union Warehouse, has also rejoined the staff part-time. Thomason will help with dispatch and some field work. He retired in January 2001 after more than 13 years with the company, and he is a welcome addition again to the staff.

### Latah County

- The University of Idaho (UI) will reorganize three colleges and consolidate various programs and departments in response to state funding holdbacks and reduced funding for higher education. Consolidation of programs and departments is expected to reduce UI's budgetary shortfall and cut redundant positions. Although moves are complex from one school to another, the objective of these moves is to establish colleges of similar size at UI. The plan for the next school year also establishes a formal partnership between the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and the College of Natural Resources. The partnership should help consolidate and strengthen administrative support in research, extension, fiscal operations, international programs, distance education, and educational technology. UI also will establish three coordinating committees for life sciences, teacher education, and social sciences. Committee members will review all programming and similar areas to recom-

mend where duplication can be removed and where existing programs can be strengthened. All outreach activities—continuing education, extension and UI centers statewide—will be combined under the direction of Vice President for Outreach.

- Pullman Memorial Hospital (PMH) in Pullman and Gritman Medical Center in Moscow are preparing to become one-stop shopping places for the health care needs of Palouse residents. Both hospitals have launched multi-million dollar expansions, betting that technology and new procedures will set them up for individual success. The two hospitals will offer similar state-of-the-art services after construction is complete. Both Gritman and PMH are recruiting doctors who can perform specialized surgeries that, with high-technology diagnostic equipment, have become the mainstays for modern hospitals. Gritman's expansion will concentrate on adding space for elective outpatient surgeries. Currently, the hospital must put patients on a waiting list. PMH's expansion will provide a combination of space for outpatient surgery and traditional hospital functions. Officials estimate the hospital, office buildings, and therapy clinics will occupy nine acres on Bishop Boulevard.

### Nez Perce County

- Construction of a new Safeway supermarket in Lewiston's Nez Perce Plaza will begin in April. When Home Depot opened February 7, Nez Perce Plaza officials had predicted Safeway construction would start by early March. A building permit for the foundation and exterior walls was issued in October. The parking lot has been built and some materials are on site. Earlier predictions were that construction would take about seven months. A lease for a Safeway fuel station is being treated as a separate project, and construction plans haven't been prepared for submission to the city yet. Construction design documents also are being completed for an AmericanWest bank that will be on one of the pads adjacent to Thain Grade. A manager has been hired, and the bank is expected to open this fall.

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# TREASURE VALLEY

ADA, ADAMS, BOISE, CANYON, ELMORE, GEM, OWYHEE, PAYETTE, VALLEY, & WASHINGTON COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Boise City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which includes Ada and Canyon Counties, was 5.1 percent for February 2002 as shown in Treasure Valley Table 1. This rate was up four-tenths of a percentage point from January's rate of 4.7 percent, and up one and nine-tenths of a percentage point from the February 2001 rate of 3.2 percent. The number of individuals employed increased from January to February by 1,300 individuals, while an increase of 900 occurred in the number of unemployed individuals, from 11,900 in January to 12,800 in February. The increase in the number employed and the increase in the number unemployed created a net increase in the *Civilian Labor Force* of 2,200 individuals from January to February 2002; year-over-year, there was a net increase of 9,500 individuals in the *Civilian Labor Force*. Treasure Valley Table 2 shows the February 2002 labor force figures for all counties in Southwest Idaho.

**Treasure Valley Table 2: February 2002  
Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Figures for  
Southwest Idaho Counties**

	Civilian Labor Force	Number Unem- ployed	Percent Unem- ployed	Number Employed
Ada	183,076	8,264	4.5	174,812
Adams	1,583	212	13.4	1,371
Boise	2,422	118	4.9	2,304
Canyon	70,251	4,597	6.5	65,654
Elmore	10,014	668	6.7	9,346
Gem	6,766	624	9.2	6,142
Owyhee	4,177	197	4.7	3,980
Payette	10,205	885	8.7	9,320
Valley	4,131	361	8.7	3,770
Washington	4,502	314	7.0	4,188
Statewide	693,797	39,121	5.6	654,676

Nearly 2,100 *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* were added to the Boise City MSA between January and February 2002, with an increase of 800 *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* since February 2001. In *Goods-Producing Industries*, there was a loss of 200 jobs

**Treasure Valley Table 1: Boise MSA Labor Force & Employment  
Ada and Canyon counties**

	Feb 2002*	Jan 2002	Feb 2001	% Change Last Month	% Change Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	253,300	251,100	243,800	0.9	3.9
Unemployment	12,800	11,900	7,800	7.6	64.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.1	4.7	3.2		
Total Employment	240,500	239,200	236,000	0.5	1.9
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	251,800	249,300	241,800	1.0	4.1
Unemployment	14,600	14,100	9,100	3.5	60.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.8	5.6	3.8		
Total Employment	237,200	235,200	232,700	0.9	1.9
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	227,400	225,300	226,600	0.9	0.4
<b>GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES</b>	49,900	50,100	53,300	-0.4	-6.4
<b>Mining &amp; Construction</b>	15,400	15,400	15,400	0.0	0.0
<b>Manufacturing</b>	34,500	34,700	37,900	-0.6	-9.0
Durable Goods	26,300	26,600	29,500	-1.1	-10.8
Lumber & Wood Products	3,000	3,000	3,000	0.0	0.0
Wood Buildings & Mobile Homes	800	800	800	0.0	0.0
Other Lumber & Wood Products	2,200	2,200	2,200	0.0	0.0
Fabricated Metal Products	1,100	1,100	1,200	0.0	-8.3
Ind. & Comm. Mach. & Computer Equip.	7,300	7,400	8,400	-1.4	-13.1
Electronic & Other Elect. Equip. & Comp.	11,400	11,600	13,300	-1.7	-14.3
Transportation Equipment	1,700	1,600	1,800	6.3	-5.6
Other Durable Goods	1,800	1,900	1,800	-5.3	0.0
Nondurable Goods	8,200	8,100	8,400	1.2	-2.4
Food Processing	5,500	5,500	5,600	0.0	-1.8
Canned Cured & Frozen Foods	1,600	1,500	1,500	6.7	6.7
Printing, Pub & Allied Products	1,900	1,900	1,900	0.0	0.0
Other Nondurable Goods	800	700	900	14.3	-11.1
<b>SERVICE-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES</b>	177,500	175,200	173,300	1.3	2.4
<b>Trans, Comm, &amp; Public Util</b>	12,000	11,900	12,400	0.8	-3.2
Transportation	6,800	6,700	6,900	1.5	-1.4
Comm & Elec, Gas & Sanitary Services	5,200	5,200	5,500	0.0	-5.5
<b>Trade</b>	55,300	55,300	55,100	0.0	0.4
Wholesale Trade	12,600	12,500	12,700	0.8	-0.8
Durable Goods	7,800	7,700	7,800	1.3	0.0
Nondurable Goods	4,800	4,800	4,900	0.0	-2.0
Retail Trade	42,700	42,800	42,400	-0.2	0.7
General Merchandise Stores	5,400	5,500	5,500	-1.8	-1.8
Foods Stores	7,400	7,500	7,500	-1.3	-1.3
Eating & Drinking Places	15,200	15,100	14,800	0.7	2.7
Other Retail Trade	14,700	14,700	14,600	0.0	0.7
<b>Finance, Insurance, &amp; Real Estate</b>	11,700	11,600	11,200	0.9	4.5
<b>Services</b>	61,900	61,200	59,900	1.1	3.3
Business Services	13,900	13,900	14,900	0.0	-6.7
Health Services	19,100	18,900	17,600	1.1	8.5
Hospitals	9,100	8,900	8,100	2.2	12.3
Eng., Acct., Res., Mngmt., & Related	5,300	5,100	5,000	3.9	6.0
Other Services	23,600	23,300	22,400	1.3	5.4
<b>Government</b>	36,600	35,200	34,700	4.0	5.5
Federal Government	5,200	5,200	4,900	0.0	6.1
State Government	13,600	12,500	13,200	8.8	3.0
Education	4,600	3,600	4,400	27.8	4.5
Administration	9,000	8,900	8,800	1.1	2.3
Local Government	17,800	17,500	16,600	1.7	7.2
Education	11,700	11,500	11,000	1.7	6.4
Administration	6,100	6,000	5,600	1.7	8.9

\* Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

month-over-month with job losses in *Industrial & Commercial Machinery & Computer Equipment Manufacturing* (100), *Electronic & Other Electrical Equipment & Components Manufacturing* (200) and *Other Durable Goods Manufacturing* (100) outpacing job gains in *Transportation Equipment Manufacturing* (100) and *Other Nondurable Goods Manufacturing* (100) to create the net decrease. Year-over-year, *Goods-Producing Industries* lost 3,400 jobs including losses in: *Fabricated Metal Products Manufacturing* (100), *Industrial & Commercial Machinery & Computer Equipment Manufacturing* (1,100), *Electronic & Other Electrical Equipment & Components Manufacturing* (1,900), *Transportation Equipment Manufacturing* (100), *Food & Kindred Products Manufacturing* (100) and *Other Nondurable Goods Manufacturing* (100). No *Goods-Producing Industry* created a net increase in employment over the year, although those not mentioned earlier remained stable over the year. The large decrease in the number of jobs in *Industrial & Commercial Machinery & Computer Equipment Manufacturing* and *Electronic & Other Electrical Equipment and Components Manufacturing* is consistent with the number of layoffs that have occurred in those industries since January 2001.

*Service-Producing Industries* gained 2,300 jobs between January and February 2002. Job increases in *Transportation* (100), *Durable Goods Wholesale Trade* (100), *Eating & Drinking Places* (100), *Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate* (100), *Health Services*, primarily *Hospitals* (200), *Engineering, Accounting, Research, Management, & Related* (200), *Other Services* (300), *State Government Education* (1,000), *State Government Administration* (100), *Local Government Education* (200), and *Local Government Administration* (100) outpaced job losses in *General Merchandise Stores* (100) and *Food Stores* (100) to create the net increase in the number of jobs in the Boise City MSA over the month. The large increase in employment in *State Government Education* occurred when faculty and staff at Boise State University returned to classes after winter break. Over the past year, there was an increase of 4,200 jobs in *Service-Producing Industries*, with the most notable job gains reported in *Health Services* (1,500), primarily *Hospitals* (1,000), *Other Services* (1,200), and *Local Government Education* (700). The only *Service-Producing Industries* to experience a loss over the year were *Transportation*, *Communications & Electricity*, *Gas & Sanitary Services*; *Nondurable Goods Trade*; *General Merchandise Stores*, *Foods Stores* and *Business Service*.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Boise City MSA

- Boise State University recently announced its proposal to ease budget cutbacks by eliminating 41 staff positions and raising student fees by more than \$300 for the 2002-02 academic year. President

Charles Ruch approved the plan, and the Idaho Board of Education must allocate the budget and vote on student fee proposals in April in order to make this plan final. The 41 positions eliminated include 22 faculty and 19 staff positions; 31 positions are now vacant or will be vacant from retirements at the end of the semester and the other ten employees will be laid off.

- Idaho Public Television (IPTV) announced in early March plans to eliminate four full-time positions due to recent budget cutbacks. The layoffs will occur in April, and will affect three employees as one of the positions eliminated was vacant. Eliminating the positions will save IPTV about \$146,500 annually.
- Albertson's Inc. announced plans in mid-March to close 116 stores and pull out of four markets in Texas and Tennessee. The 116 closures are in addition to the 165 drug and grocery stores that the company targeted for closure last July. In addition to the 116 closures in Memphis, Nashville, Houston, and San Antonio, Albertson's also will close three division offices that supported those stores. Company officials stated, "Exiting these underperforming markets finalizes another major chapter in the restructuring of our company; this will now allow us to focus resources on strategic markets that build shareholder value and offer opportunity for significant future growth."
- Big Sky Airlines recently announced that it would begin service between Boise and Billings on May 5, 2002. The new flights are designed to accommodate a growing demand for same-day business travel between the two cities as well as a number of possible connecting flights. The new nonstop service will use the 19-passenger Fairchild Metro turbo-prop plane. The two flights to Billings will depart from the Boise Airport at 6 a.m. and 3 p.m., while the flights to Boise (from Billings) will depart at 8:35 a.m. and 5:45 p.m.
- Frontier Airlines also announced two nonstop round-trip flights from Boise to Denver, which will start June 24. Frontier is a Denver-based airline with service to several regions of the lower 48 states. The airline initially will use two versions of Boeing's 120-seat 737 on this route, but ultimately those aircrafts will be phased out and the company will use Airbus' 136-seat A319. The flights from Denver to Boise will be at 9 a.m. and 8:50 p.m. and the flights from Boise to Denver will depart at 7:05 a.m. and 12:55 p.m.
- Qwest Communication International announced in early March that it plans on opening a new customer service call center in Boise this summer. The

290-employee Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) technical support center will open in July. Currently, DSL customers receive technical support that is provided by contract workers located in a variety of areas throughout the west; the new call center will replace those contract workers.

- The Meridian City Council approved an \$833,000 contract in mid-March to develop the first 25 acres of Settler's Park, which will eventually become Meridian's largest park. The first phase of the park will include six soccer fields, a picnic shelter, and a 231-space parking lot. This phase is scheduled to begin this spring. The second phase, which could begin in 2003, may consist of additional soccer fields, a playground, an indoor ice rink, and an area for outdoor gatherings such as farmers' markets. The new regional park will be located at the corner of Ustick and Meridian Roads.
- Roaring Springs Water Park has plans to open May 18 when it will unveil a new slide, The Avalanche, and the addition of a beach area for volleyball and sandcastle construction. The Avalanche, currently under construction, is one of only about 35 such slides in the world. Improvements are expected to cost \$350,000.
- Information regarding the proposed Hewlett-Packard-Compaq merger was released throughout the month. Compaq Computer Corp. investors gave approval to Hewlett-Packard's (HP) \$20 billion acquisition of the company after HP officials announced the slim-margin victory in the shareholder vote. HP shareholders voted on whether or not the merger should continue. HP President Carly Fiorina, announced a "slim but sufficient" majority in favor of the deal. The recently released preliminary proxy vote count reconfirmed the majority vote.
- In March, MicronPC announced several new products, including two compact servers and a new laptop. The NetFRAME 1500 and NetFRAME 2500 were introduced in early March following the introduction of NetFRAME 3500 in December. NetFRAME 1500 is five times smaller than the original model (NetFRAME 3500), and NetFRAME 2500 is 2.5 times smaller than the original. MicronPC says that the new configuration allows the new servers to be stacked 42 and 21 to a rack, respectively. Both models are equipped with two Pentium 3 processors, allowing the servers to process two information requests simultaneously. The company also unveiled a new laptop, the TransPort GTX3, which is one of the few laptop computers available with the mobile version of the Pentium 4 processor. The new notebook is the only U.S.-manufactured notebook computer with fingerprint scanners that al-

low only authorized users to boot them up. For information on either product, please see the company website at [www.micronpc.com](http://www.micronpc.com).

- Former Nampa Mayor Maxine Horn has opened a new business, Maxine Horn & Co. Realtors, at 912 Twelfth Avenue South; Maxine and her daughter, Cindy Oliver, specialize in new home sales.
- The Real Estate Store, located at 1116A 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in Nampa, held a grand opening celebration on March 6. The Real Estate Store offers regular real estate brokerage services and features a showroom set up with display listings for all of southwest Idaho, which customers can look through independently.
- The Yesteryear Shoppe, a used bookstore located at 1211 First Street South in downtown Nampa, is expanding. The business purchased the space next to its current location to provide more room for merchandise as well as more space between bookshelves for customers. The store is open during the renovation, which is almost complete. Hours of operation are 11 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday.
- Suicycle, a motorcycle, snowmobile, accessories and parts store that also provides service and repairs, recently reopened in its old location at 928 Caldwell Boulevard in Nampa. The store is open Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m., .
- The Roasterè, a coffee shop located on the corner of Cleveland Boulevard and 21<sup>st</sup> in Caldwell in the former location of the Bean Hopper, celebrated its grand opening in March. The Roasterè offers over 100 kinds of whole-bean coffee, pastries, teas, coffee mugs, jams, and jellies. The coffee shop is open from 6:30 a.m. - 7 p.m., Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday.
- Best Inn and Suites, located on 901 Specht Avenue in Caldwell, recently changed its name to LaQuinta Inn. The hotel also is planning a remodeling project in the near future.
- The Melba Rural Health Clinic was in danger of closing due to financial struggles, but in mid-March, at a Melba City Council meeting, Terry Reilly Health Services Executive Director announced plans for the company to purchase the practice and equipment to keep the clinic in operation. Terry Reilly Health Services also will make several improvements including a new building and longer hours of operation; in addition to medical services, dental and social services also will be provided to patients. The acquisition was made possible by the approval of a \$390,000 federal grant, which is renewable each year. The existing clinic will be vacated, and the operations will move to a new 3,200-square-foot facility that will be con-

structed about two blocks south on land donated by the owners of Swan Falls Produce at Broadway and Second Streets.

#### **Boise County**

- Bogus Basin Ski Resort extended its season by an additional week because of unseasonable heavy snowfall in mid-March. The resort remained open through April 14, a week later than usual. Bogus Basin had a record-breaking season with more than 336,000 skier visits.

#### **Elmore County**

- Kmart Corporation announced that it will close the Mountain Home Kmart as part of its closure of 284 stores nationwide. The company did not offer any transfers to employees of the corporation involved in the 284 store closings, but employees are encouraged to apply for Kmart jobs elsewhere. The Mountain Home Kmart employed 170 persons at one time, although recent slowdowns have decreased that number. The store is expected to close sometime in May 2002, when stock and inventory levels are depleted. The closing is not expected to have a large impact on the property tax rolls for the county, but the number of jobs lost is added to a number of closures that occurred recently in downtown Mountain Home.

#### **Gem County**

- Emmett Ford owner, Dave Vaughn, recently announced plans to close his Ford Dealership located on West Main Street in Caldwell. Dave decided to retire and close the business after 27 years in operation. The Ford Company will purchase the parts and new vehicle inventory of Emmett Ford, and the used cars will be sold. The closure will leave about 15 employees without jobs; some will retire and others will look for new positions.

#### **Payette County**

- In early March, the Payette City Council unanimously approved Resolution 241, which allows Russ Manwaring or Resource Conservation and Development to apply for a Department of Commerce grant on behalf of Pine Pride, a furniture manufacturer in Payette. The grant is awarded to wood products businesses that use wood resources from federal lands. To qualify for the grant, the company must be sponsored by the city; the city also will be the lien holder on the equipment purchased with the grant monies. The maximum grant value, if awarded, is \$50,000, and Pine Pride must have matching funds of 20 percent, or \$10,000.
- The Idaho Division of Professional Technical Education recently awarded a grant to the New Plymouth High School Agriculture Science and Technology Department. The nearly \$10,000 grant mon-

ies will be used to update and modernize the greenhouse facility used by students. The new equipment will include mist timers for temperature relation, hydroponics lab, and a fertilizer injector unit.

#### **Valley County**

- In mid-March, the Idaho State Land Board voted to begin formal negotiations to lease state land to the developers of the proposed WestRock resort on Lake Cascade. This vote puts the project a step closer to approval. The Idaho Department of Lands and the developers have a difference in opinion on how much money WestRock would pay the state in rent for the 2,124 acres on West Mountain where a proposed ski area will be built. A deadline for the negotiations was not set, although WestRock developers hope to bring a finished lease to the Land Board in April. Governor Kempthorne stressed that the approval for negotiations is not an approval for the project; it is just the next step in the process.

#### **Washington County**

- Rodex Industries, with help from Lisa Wolfe, has announced plans to expand into new facilities. Rodex Industries manufactures the Rodex 4000 anti-gopher gun. The company stated that increased national and international sales of the product were reasons for the expansion. Lisa Wolfe, Washington and Adams County Economic Development Facilitator, helped Rodex get in touch with state and federal programs available to assist rural Idaho businesses to expand markets and create new jobs. The company explored the feasibility of building a new facility in Midvale, which would increase the capacity from the current 20 employees to between 40 and 45 employees. The planned 15,000-square-foot facility will allow the company to consolidate all of its manufacturing and marketing functions, and allow for expansion and more efficient production.

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# MAGIC VALLEY

BLAINE, CAMAS, CASSIA, GOODING, JEROME, LINCOLN, MINIDOKA, & TWIN FALLS COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for The Magic Valley Labor Market area was 4.2 percent for February 2002, a reduction of one-tenth of a percentage point from February 2001 as shown on Magic Valley Table 1. The reduction of two-tenths of a percentage point from January 2002 to February 2002 is a good indicator that the South Central Idaho economy is remaining relative strong and steady and that diversification efforts in Economic Development are paying off.

Overall, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* showed a 2.3 percent increase since last year primarily upon the strength of *Service-Producing Industries*, which rose 3.7 percent. That increase was heavily influenced by *Services*, which rose 17.5 percent over the year. South Central Idaho has a high concentration of temporary worker agencies, and there has been a large increase in this sector as businesses have relied on temporary workers to round out their work forces. *Mining & Construction* are down from the past couple of years because inclement weather halted numerous construction projects. However, with a large jump in new housing starts, *Construction* is expected to be robust when the weather clears.

An area of great concern is the 5.2 percent reduction in *Government-Education*. The 2002 Legislature has passed a very austere budget since state government is facing serious revenue shortfalls and most major school districts, as well as the College of Southern Idaho, may have to seriously trim back staffs. The loss of these stable, good-paying jobs most likely will have a detrimental effect on the economy of South Central Idaho. Overall, however, the South Central economy is weathering the present recession well, and now that national economists are predicting an end to the recession, South Central Idaho is set to be a state leader in eco-

Magic Valley Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Twin Falls, Jerome, and Gooding counties

	Feb 2002*	Jan 2002	Feb 2001	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	51,490	51,930	49,450	-0.8	4.1
Unemployment	2,180	2,270	2,040	-4.0	6.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.2	4.4	4.1		
Total Employment	49,310	49,660	47,410	-0.7	4.0
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	49,680	50,070	47,750		4.0
Unemployment	2,600	2,700	2,520	-3.7	3.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.2	5.4	5.3		
Total Employment	47,080	47,370	45,230	-0.6	4.1
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>					
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	6,440	6,460	6,710	-0.3	-4.0
Mining & Construction	1,520	1,570	1,570	-3.2	-3.2
Manufacturing	4,920	4,890	5,140	0.6	-4.3
Durable Goods	840	840	900	0.0	-6.7
Nondurable Goods	4,080	4,050	4,240	0.7	-3.8
Food Processing	3,090	3,070	3,190	0.7	-3.1
All Other Nondurable Goods	990	980	1,050	1.0	-5.7
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	31,530	31,830	30,400	-0.9	3.7
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	2,630	2,660	2,590	-1.1	1.5
Wholesale Trade	2,210	2,200	2,290	0.5	-3.5
Retail Trade	7,810	7,850	7,910	-0.5	-1.3
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,290	1,300	1,360	-0.8	-5.1
Services	10,130	10,570	8,620	-4.2	17.5
Government Administration	3,780	3,740	3,750	1.1	0.8
Government Education	3,680	3,710	3,880	-0.8	-5.2

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

nomie growth and diversification, and an example of well coordinated and useful economic development.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Twin Falls County

- Three new retailers in the new North Canyon Project retail center are hiring as they prepare to open their stores. Old Navy, T.J. Maxx, and Michael's are hiring full- and part-time retail workers to staff the new stores. Magic Valley Job Service provided personnel assistance for a job fair held by T.J. Maxx at the West Coast Hotel in Twin Falls in early March. Michael's is interviewing applicants at the Magic Valley Job Service office. In total, the three retailers are expected to hire 200-300 workers, most of them part-time. It is expected that the stores will open sometime in April or May 2002.



- Illinois-based pharmacy corporation Walgreen Company has announced intentions to locate a new store in Twin Falls. If the deal proceeds as planned, Walgreen's will lease a building from Hawkins Companies, LLC, a Boise commercial development firm. The company plans to build a brick 14,490-square-foot Walgreen's pharmacy with a dual drive-through window on about 1.4 acres at the northeast corner of Blue Lakes Boulevard North and Heyburn Avenue East. It currently is the location of a Mr. Gas convenience store. If the plan proceeds and is approved by the city, the developer hoped to begin demolishing the convenience store and start pharmacy construction in mid-April with completion by September or October 2002. The new store will open 30-60 days later. Typically, Walgreen's hires five to eight workers to run a store of this size.
- Twin Falls School District Superintendent Dr. Terrell Donicht has been named Educator of the Year by the Idaho State University chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, an honor society in education. Donicht was honored because of the district's ability to consistently rank higher than the national average on standardized tests. Also, the district was one of four nationwide featured in a study as an example of a district that significantly increased student achievement while serving a high number of minority and/or economically disadvantaged students. This is the second major honor for Dr. Donicht this year. Earlier this year, he was named Idaho's 2002 Superintendent of the Year by the Idaho School Board Association.
- Filer Mutual Telephone Co. is moving to a new office building across from its present location on Main Street in Filer. In September 2001, Filer Mutual began constructing a new 10,000-square-foot office across from its old building that it has occupied since 1909. The new building will give the company room for new equipment to improve service. Filer Mutual is a nonprofit co-op owned by more than 3,000 members in a service area that extends north to the canyon rim and 35 miles south into Nevada.

#### **Jerome, Gooding, Lincoln, Camas, and Blaine Counties**

- Valley Co-op, Inc. has decided to sell its fertilizer division to Agrilience, LLC. Agrilience is an agronomy marketing joint venture owned by Land O'Lakes, Inc., CHS Cooperatives, and Farmland Industries with the head office in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The sale involves assets only; Valley Co-op will continue to process sales, and customers will still be eligible to receive patronage dividends. Valley Co-op, with locations in Shoshone and Jerome, did not sell the petroleum division, farm store, feed operations, convenience store, or propane operations.

Eight employees with Valley Co-op's agronomy business have accepted positions with Agrilience.

#### **Cassia And Minidoka Counties**

- Kmart Corporation announced that it will close two Kmart stores in Idaho—in Burley and Mountain Home—as part of its nationwide closure of 284 stores. Kmart will offer no transfers to any employees involved in the 284 store closings in 40 states, but employees are encouraged to apply for Kmart jobs elsewhere. The Burley Big Kmart employs a full- and part-time staff of 79. Staff from the Mini-Cassia Job Service met with Kmart managers and employees, and will be assisting displaced workers to provide unemployment insurance service and specialized assistance in job searches, interviewing, and resume skills. They will also conduct workshops specifically for Kmart employees to help them find future jobs. The store is expected to close sometime in May 2002 as soon as stock and inventory levels are depleted.
- Three co-located potato operations in Rupert—Magic Valley Foods, Rolland Jones Potatoes, and Silver Creek Produce—have suspended operations indefinitely in Rupert. This suspension has idled approximately 150 workers, and no specific date for a return to operations has been given. Magic Valley Foods produces dehydrated potato products; Rolland Jones handles fresh pack potatoes; Silver Creek Produce handles fresh pack vegetables. Silver Creek Produce has closed down and the company is looking at marketing options for Magic Valley Produce.

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# SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's (MSA) February 2002 seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.8 percent. The state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.6 percent and the nation was 5.5 percent. The Pocatello MSA's rate fell four-tenths of a percentage point from January 2002 when it was 6.2 percent. From February 2001 to February 2002 the unemployment rate increased from 4.3 percent to 5.8 percent. The jump occurred because of mass layoffs at American Microsystems, Inc. and Astaris LLC in the Pocatello area.

In February, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 1.6 percent from 32,500 to 33,030, or 530 more than the previous month. The *Service-Producing Industries* increased 570 jobs while the *Goods-Producing Industries* decreased by 40 jobs in February 2001. Within the *Service-Producing Industries*, significant increases occurred in *Government Education* and *Services*. *Government Education* increased because students returned for winter semester at Idaho State University and *Services* increased because of additional hiring in *Business Service* (call centers), *Amusement and Recreation* (ski areas), *Hotels and Motels*, and *Healthcare*.

From February 2001 to February 2002, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* declined by 1.1 percent from 33,410 to 33,030, or 380 jobs. The *Service-Producing Industries* lost 90 jobs and the *Goods-Producing Industries* lost 290 jobs. In the *Service-Producing Industries*, jobs losses in *Retail Trade* were minimized by job gains in *Finance, Insurance & Real Estate*. Most other industries remained about the same as in February 2001. In the *Goods-Producing Industries*, job losses were in *Manufacturing* because of the national economic recession that occurred in 2001.

## SPECIAL TOPIC

### 2001 Construction

Construction is a powerful indicator of an area's economic well-being. Construction activity provides good-paying

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	Feb 2002*	Jan 2002	Feb 2001	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	41,400	41,350	40,470	0.1	2.3
Unemployment	2,390	2,570	1,760	-7.0	35.8
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.8	6.2	4.3		
Total Employment	39,010	38,780	38,810	0.6	0.5
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	41,930	41,480	41,040	1.1	2.2
Unemployment	2,790	2,940	2,130	-5.1	31.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	6.7	7.1	5.2		
Total Employment	39,140	38,540	38,910	1.6	0.6
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	33,030	32,500	33,410	1.6	-1.1
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	4,230	4,270	4,520	-0.9	-6.4
Mining & Construction	1,640	1,690	1,600	-3.0	2.5
Manufacturing	2,590	2,580	2,920	0.4	-11.3
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	28,800	28,230	28,890	2.0	-0.3
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	1,740	1,730	1,720	0.6	1.2
Wholesale Trade	1,420	1,450	1,430	-2.1	-0.7
Retail Trade	6,760	6,760	7,030	0.0	-3.8
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,800	1,770	1,660	1.7	8.4
Services	7,980	7,860	7,990	1.5	-0.1
Government Administration	3,370	3,390	3,330	-0.6	1.2
Government Education	5,730	5,270	5,730	8.7	0.0

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

jobs (typically close to or exceeding the average wages of the area), which in turn pay for supplies and services that are sold by area businesses. In addition, businesses purchase materials and supplies for construction projects. Construction activity also is an indicator of business and individual's confidence in an area's economy. If businesses and individuals are confident in an area's economy they are more willing to invest or reinvest in their properties. Despite a difficult year economically, 2001 construction activity, according to the **Wells Fargo Idaho Construction Report**, was encouraging.

*Chart 1: Southeast Idaho Construction* (on page 18) shows the change in residential and commercial construction activity over the past five years (1997-2001). Southeast Idaho's construction activity, as measured by permit values, increased 9.5 percent from 1997 to 2001 and 26.4 percent from 2000 to 2001. Construction activity peaked in 1998 at \$110,898,963 then declined in 1999 and 2000 before it climbed to its 2001 level of \$107,164,778. Southeast Idaho construction activity outpaced Idaho's construction activity in 2001 when statewide construction values declined five-tenths of a percentage point, dropping from \$2,113,294,271 in 2000 to \$2,101,595,265 in 2001.

*Chart 2: Construction by Area* (on page 18), shows the change in construction activity from 1997 to 2001 by area. The following is a synopsis by

Chart 1: Construction by Area (percent change)

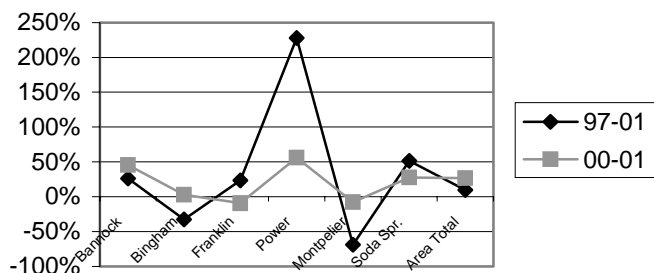
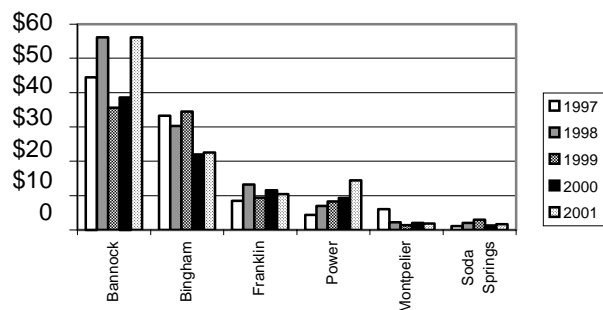


Chart 2: Construction by Area (permit value in millions)



area. Average wages listed in the area narrative are from 2000 because 2001 final data is not available.

### Bannock County

Bannock County's construction grew 26.2 percent from 1997 to 2001 and 45.4 percent from 2000 to 2001. The average wage for construction workers was \$27,582. The increase in construction activity between 2000 and 2001 was evenly split between residential and nonresidential construction. Construction of several new businesses contributed to high construction values throughout the area. Over the past five years, construction activity peaked in 1998 at \$56,131,258 and fell to a low of \$35,558,042 in 1999.

### Bingham County

Construction in Bingham County grew 2.4 percent from 2000 to 2001, but fell 32.4 percent from 1997 to 2001. The average wage for construction workers was \$23,622. The increase in construction activity between 2000 and 2001 was in *Additions, Alterations, and Repairs* as business and individuals expanded and improved properties throughout the county. The decline in construction activity between 1997 and 2001 was primarily in nonresidential construction. Over the last five years, construction activity peaked in 1999 at \$34,450,720 and was at a low of \$21,977,412 in 2000.

### Franklin County

Between 1997 and 2001, Franklin County's construction activity increased 23.4 percent but fell 9.2 percent

from 2000 to 2001. The average wage for construction workers in Franklin County was \$17,505. The increase in construction activity between 1997 and 2001 was primarily in nonresidential construction. Between 2000 and 2001, construction fell in nonresidential construction. Over the last five years, construction activity peaked in 1998 at \$13,237,415 and fell to a low of \$8,476,792 in 1997.

### Power County

Power County's construction grew 55.7 percent from 2000 to 2001 and 227.9 percent from 1997 to 2001. The average wage for construction workers in Power County was \$25,668. Growth in construction activity was in nonresidential construction for both the 2000 to 2001 and 1997 to 2001 time periods. Over the last five years, construction activity peaked at \$14,483,150 in 2001 and fell to a low of \$4,416,965 in 1997.

### Montpelier City

Construction in Montpelier fell 8.1 percent from 2000 to 2001 and dropped 68.9 percent from 1997 to 2001. In 1997, construction began on the Oregon/California Trails Interpretive Center, which drove construction permit values unusually high. The average wage for construction workers in Bear Lake County (average wage is not available for cities) was \$11,956. Since 1997, construction activity has remained fairly constant and the economy is actually better than it appears by the five-year comparison. Over the last five years, construction activity peaked in 1997 at \$6,101,150 and fell to a low of \$1,435,844 in 1999.

### Soda Spring City

Soda Spring's construction activity grew an impressive 51.1 percent between 1997 and 2001 and 27.6 percent between 2000 and 2001. The average wage for construction workers in Caribou County (average wage is not available for cities) was \$28,240. The increase in construction activity was in nonresidential construction and mostly because of the new purified phosphorous manufacturing facility at Agrium. Over the last five years, construction activity reached a high of \$2,948,234 in 1999 and fell to a low of \$1,133,884 in 1997.

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# NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate for the Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA) remained constant at 4.1 percent over the month and at a year-over-year comparison as shown in Northeast Table 1. The four counties showed some mixed movement, however slight. Bingham County remained constant over the month at 4.9 percent, but increased one-tenth of a percentage point from February 2001. Bonneville County also remained unchanged over the month at 3.7 percent, but increased one-tenth of a percentage point from one year ago.

Butte County experienced the largest monthly percentage change of the four, decreasing five-tenths of a percentage point to 4.0 percent and decreasing one-tenth of a percentage point from a year-over-year comparison. Jefferson County increased three-tenths of a percentage point over the month to 4.3 percent, but remained constant from February 2001. Idaho Falls, the largest city in the LMA, experienced no change in the unemployment rate over the month and decreased one-tenth of a percentage point from one year ago.

Of the other counties in Northeast Idaho, Clark County showed the largest percentage change in the unemployment rate. An increase of 1.3 percentage points brought the rate to a current 5.4 percent as extreme cold temperatures and inclement weather still affected the larger businesses over the month. The county only experienced a one-tenth of a percentage point increase from February 2001. Custer County's rate of 8.9 percent was an increase of one-tenth of a percentage point over the month and a decrease of 1.6 percentage points from one year ago after the fires and mining layoffs of 2000. Fremont County's rate, at 6.2 percent, decreased two-tenths of a percentage point from the previous month and decreased nine-tenths of a percentage point from February 2001. Concentration on economic develop-

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, & Jefferson counties

	Feb 2002*	Jan 2002	Feb 2001	% Change From Last Month	% Change From Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	81,710	81,470	81,060	0.3	0.8
Unemployment	3,360	3,320	3,280	1.2	2.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.1	4.1	4.1		
Total Employment	78,350	78,140	77,770	0.3	0.7
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	80,320	80,010	79,740	0.4	0.7
Unemployment	3,930	3,820	3,970	2.9	-1.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.9	4.8	5.0		
Total Employment	76,390	76,190	75,770	0.3	0.8
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	60,110	59,980	60,670	0.2	-0.9
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	8,530	8,580	8,590	-0.6	-0.7
Mining & Construction	3,600	3,660	3,310	-1.6	8.8
Manufacturing	4,930	4,920	5,280	0.2	-6.6
Food Processing	2,460	2,480	2,930	-0.8	-16.0
Ind. & Com. Mach. & Computer Equip.	500	470	450	6.4	11.1
All Other Manufacturing	1,970	1,970	1,900	0.0	3.7
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	51,580	51,400	52,080	0.4	-1.0
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	2,300	2,330	2,300	-1.3	0.0
Wholesale Trade	5,230	5,220	5,740	0.2	-8.9
Retail Trade	10,970	10,970	10,810	0.0	1.5
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,890	1,880	1,850	0.5	2.2
Services	20,620	20,550	20,680	0.3	-0.3
Government Administration	5,020	5,030	5,200	-0.2	-3.5
Government Education	5,550	5,420	5,500	2.4	0.9

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

ment and ML Technology's expansion in the county is helping stabilize seasonal and agricultural swings. Lemhi County's rate of 7.8 percent showed a month-over-month increase of four-tenths of a percentage point, but a decrease of 1.1 percentage points year-over-year because of the fires of 2000. Madison County remained constant over the month and decreased three-tenths of a percentage point from February 2001. The county should continue to see a very low unemployment rate as BYU-Idaho and the economy are both experiencing gradual growth resulting in new job creation. Teton County experienced a decrease of five-tenths of a percentage point in its unemployment rate over the month, at 3.3 percent, as resorts and lodges were full of tourists, and Olympic teams and challengers utilized the area for preparing for the games. However, the county was up six-tenths of a percentage point from February 2001 as the national economy and the effects of the September 11 terrorist attacks slowed tourism overall.

Smaller variances were seen in *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* over the month as the LMA experienced a total increase of 130 jobs. *Goods-Producing Industries* showed a decrease of 50 jobs, most all in *Construction* as expected at this

time in the year. The other industries only changed slightly. *Service-Producing Industries* increased 180 jobs, with the major increases stemming from *Government Education* and *Services*. *Government Education* added 130 jobs as all schools were back into session after holiday breaks. *Services* increased 70 jobs as *Social Services*, *Non-profit Organizations*, *Health Services*, and *Hotels & Other Lodging* equally combined to offset the decrease of 60 jobs in *Business Services*.

A year-over-year comparison was a little more dramatic as *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* decreased by 560. *Goods-Producing Industries* only decreased by 60 jobs (*Food Processing's* loss of 470 jobs overpowered a gain in *Construction* of 290 jobs) while *Service-Producing Industries* accounted for the remaining decrease of 500 jobs. *Wholesale Trade* lost the most, 510 jobs, while *Government Administration* lost 180. *Wholesale Trade* has been seeing this trend over the last few months as last year's shortage of water and overproduction of potatoes led to such a low price that many farmers did not sell in an attempt to bring prices to a profitable level. This situation led to apprehension for this season, several making the decision to grow other crops or reduce the amount of acreage usually used on this crop to avoid a repeat of the past season. Technological improvements in the warehouses that "ready" the product have also decreased the need for some workers.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Bonneville County

- Tasty's franchise, owned by Kent Fife, will open in Idaho Falls at the 500 block of South Woodruff. This will be Fife's fourth restaurant and will serve doughnuts made of potato flour, breakfast, soup, and sub sandwiches. The end of March is the anticipated opening. The company's web address is <http://www.trymeimtasty.com>.
- Idaho Falls City Council unanimously voted to allow Wal-Mart the right to two entrances along Hitt Road where it proposes to build a new supercenter. Hitt Road has experienced great growth over the past two-and-a-half years with the addition of Edwards Cinemas and many retail stores. With the Grand Teton Mall on the west side of Hitt and several retail businesses on the east side of Hitt, the intersection just south of where the supercenter will be located has become extremely busy. Much more traffic is anticipated with the opening of the supercenter. Eastern Idaho Technical College (EITC) agreed to move its northern entrance to the south since it sits across from the proposed Wal-Mart location so that a traffic signal could be put in to help traffic flows for both entities. Wal-Mart's purchase of the 30-acre plus parcel should be finalized soon. Although the supercenter is still awaiting the city of Ammon's approval of the site plan and Bonneville

County has to grant access to the property along Hitt Road, Wal-Mart is confident that it will start building soon.

- Eastern Idaho Technical College hosted the Center for New Direction's 17th annual Job Options Conference for Women on March 19. Over 160 attendees, presenters, and organizers were in attendance where Mayor Milam of Idaho Falls was the keynote speaker for the opening ceremony. Many great workshops followed with a tour of the EITC facilities and exhibits of local industries and EITC programs.

### Madison County

- Collaborative Genetics Inc. (CGI), a biotechnical company that develops diagnostic test strips to determine anthrax and botulinum toxins from bodily fluids, has announced plans to build in Rexburg. The California-based company will start with a 5,600-square-foot building in the Rexburg Business Park and employ 18 people within the first year. The projected employment will rise to about 130 after three years. The company expects completion by July. The strips can show results in as little as three to four minutes and can be used in livestock, food-industries businesses, hospitals, and clinical labs along with expected anti-terror and military applications. Company President Bruce Tedeschi plans to team up with Idaho State University's College of Pharmacy and Department of Biological Sciences to develop the tests. Tedeschi moved to Rigby from San Diego about a year ago and was very impressed with Rexburg and Clair Boyle, executive director of the Madison Economic Development Corporation. Tedeschi has over 25 years of experience in research and development, marketing, and inventory control for many biotechnology companies.

### Custer County

- Way Out West Realty opened a new office at 1303 Hwy 93 South in the Bent Rod Office Complex in Challis. The office specializes in residential, ranch, and recreational opportunities. Sandra Hill, broker and owner, runs the business with two associates; Barbara Hawkins and Robert Piva. The phone number is 879-2211.

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# F.Y.I.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

## FEDERAL EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS IN EFFECT FOR IDAHO

On March 9, Governor Kempthorne signed an agreement allowing Idaho claimants to apply for Temporary Emergency Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) as part of the Economic Stimulus Package. The program provides federal funding to pay up to 13 weeks of TEUC benefits to qualified workers who filed for unemployment insurance on March 11, 2001 or later, who collected all of the regular benefits to which they were entitled, and who currently are unemployed. Benefits under this program are payable to individuals for periods of unemployment occurring after March 10, 2002. The TEUC benefit program will run through December 28, 2002.

This program offers vital income for many unemployed Idaho workers who need to provide for their families while they continue to seek new jobs. The additional benefits will be funded 100 per cent by the federal government. Approximately 19,500 Idaho claimants may be eligible for as much as \$30.5 million in TEUC benefits through the end of this year. This bill will bring relief to thousands of Idaho workers who are struggling to get back into employment, as well as stabilize the economies of areas hit by the recent

economic downturn. Through the week ending April 6, 2002, Idaho had processed 4,577 initial claims, compensated 9,926 weeks, and paid \$2,264,273 in TEUC benefits to unemployed Idahoans.

The last time a 100 percent federally funded additional benefit program, Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC), was initiated in Idaho it ran from November of 1991 through June of 1993. More than \$54,000,000 in benefits was paid to Idaho claimants during this time at no additional cost to our trust fund.

### IDAHO CONTINUED CLAIMS

Unemployment Insurance in Idaho is embracing the age and ease of the Internet! Internet Continued Claim (ICC) is simple and very accessible. Idaho unemployment insurance claimants now have the option to file their weekly claim for benefits using one of three methods: (1) phone using Tel-A-Claim (208) 334-4700, (2) Internet using ICC at <http://www.idahoworks.state.id.us/> (click on "weekly Continued Claim Report) or (3) mail using Continued Claim Card. Hundreds of unemployed claimants may now avoid long distance phone charges by filing through the Internet, rather than calling the Tel-A-Claim system.

## State Overview—(Continued from page 4)

and assisted care facilities. As the population continues to age, the demand for alternative housing also will continue to increase.

### Government

Total *Government* during February 2002 showed a large increase from January. Nearly 3,100 jobs were created month-over-month bringing the number of jobs to 113,500. This increase is largely found in *Government – Education*.

### State Government – Education

The *State Government-Education* sector showed a 7.3 percent increase in the number of jobs from January to February 2002 or an additional 14,500 jobs. The majority of these jobs are not new; they represent college professors and students returning to work after the holiday vacation. This is evident by the large month-over-month increase of 13.8 percent. However, the year-over-year increase was only 1.4 percent.

### Local Government – Education

A significant increase in the number of jobs in *Local Government – Education* occurred in February with a 2.5

percent increase, or 1,000 jobs, bringing the total number of jobs in February to 41,000 in this sector. The year-over-year change mirrored the month-over-month change—a 2.5 percent, or 1,000 jobs, increase. Frequently, additional support staff is hired at the beginning of a new semester.

The growth in both of these educational sectors will diminish over the year as a result of state budget shortfalls. All public schools will be reducing their budgets by 10 percent, which will be reflected in the number of jobs. Some jobs will be lost and some jobs that are currently vacant will not be filled.

### SUMMARY

Overall, Idaho's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased slightly in February 2002 from January and February 2001. The immediate outlook is for the same—very slow growth.

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# Glossary of Labor Market Terms

**Agriculture Employment:** Persons on agriculture payrolls who work or receive pay for any period during the survey week. This includes owners, operators, unpaid family members who work at least 15 hours a week, and hired laborers.

**Average Hourly Earnings/Average Weekly Hours:** The average total money earnings earned by production or non-supervisory workers for selected industries. The average number of hours worked by production or non-supervisory workers including overtime, paid vacation, and sick leave. The data is collected for the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**Average Weekly Earnings:** Average Hourly Earnings multiplied by Average Weekly Hours.

**Civilian Labor Force:** A count of non-institutional persons 16 years of age and over residing within a specific geographic area, excluding members of armed forces, who are classified as employed, unemployed and seeking employment, or involved in a labor dispute.

**Consumer Price Index (CPI):** A national index measuring changes over time in the price of a fixed market basket of goods and services. There are two indexes—the All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) represents the buying habits of about 80 percent of the non-institutional population of the United States, and the Urban Wage & Clerical Workers (CPI-W) represents 40 percent of the population.

**Covered Employers:** Employers who are subject to state and federal Unemployment Insurance laws.

**Durable Goods:** Also known as “hard goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers with a normal life expectancy of three years or more.

**Employed:** Individuals, 16 years of age or older, who worked at least 1 hour for pay or profit or worked at least 15 unpaid hours in a family business during the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the month. Individuals are also counted as employed if they had a job but did not work because they were: ill, on vacation, in a labor dispute, prevented from working because of bad weather, or temporarily absent for similar reasons.

**Initial Claim:** Any notice of unemployment filed to request (1) a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation or (2) a second or subsequent period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

**Labor Market Area (LMA):** An area that consists of a central city or cities and the surrounding territory within commuting distance. It is an economically integrated geographic area within which individuals can reside and find employment without changing place of residence. Idaho has nine LMAs.

**Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA):** An area that has either a city with a population of at least 50,000 or a Bureau of Census urbanized area of at least 50,000 and a total metropolitan area of at least 100,000. The Office of Management and Budget designates the MSAs. There are two MSAs in Idaho—Boise City (including Ada and Canyon counties) and Pocatello City (including Bannock County).

**Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment:** Persons on nonfarm establishment payrolls (including employees on paid sick leave, paid holiday, or paid vacation) who work or receive pay for any part of the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month. It is a count of jobs by place of work. It does not include self-employed, unpaid volunteer or family workers, domestic workers in households, military personnel and persons who are laid off, on leave without pay, or on strike for the entire reference period.

**Nondurable Goods:** Also known as “soft goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers that generally last for only a short period of time (three years or less).

**Seasonally Adjusted:** Data is seasonally adjusted to remove the impact of regular events that occur at the same time every year such as the effect of cold weather on outdoor activities, the Christmas holiday, or the summer influx of youth into the labor market.

**Unemployed:** Those individuals, 16 years of age or older, who do not have a job but are available for work and actively seeking work during the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month. The only exceptions to these criteria are individuals who are waiting to be recalled from a layoff and individuals waiting to report to a new job within 30 days—these, too, are considered unemployed.

**Unemployment Insurance:** Unemployment Insurance is a program for the accumulation of funds paid by employers, to be used for the payment of Unemployment Insurance to workers during periods of unemployment which are beyond their control.

**Unemployment Rate:** The number of persons unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labor force.

**Weekly Benefit Amount:** The amount payable to a claimant for a compensable week of total unemployment.

**Weeks Claimed:** The number of weeks that unemployed workers claimed Unemployment Insurance benefits.

**Weeks Compensated:** The number of weeks for which compensation was actually paid.